



Virginia Regulatory Town Hall

Notice of Intended Regulatory Action Agency Background Document

Agency Name:	20
VAC Chapter Number:	21
Regulation Title:	Licensure Regulations for Teachers
Action Title:	Military Alternative Route ("Career Switcher")
Date:	4/17/00

This information is required prior to the submission to the Registrar of Regulations of a Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA) pursuant to the Administrative Process Act § 9-6.14:7.1 (B). Please refer to Executive Order Twenty-Five (98) and Executive Order Fifty-Eight (99) for more information.

Purpose

Please describe the subject matter and intent of the planned regulation. This description should include a brief explanation of the need for and the goals of the new or amended regulation.

The purpose of the regulatory change is to eliminate unnecessary and burdensome paperwork for local school divisions, to streamline and shorten the time required for training for military personnel who wish to be licensed as classroom teachers, and to permit qualified personnel to utilize prior, relevant training and experience to meet the requirements for a Virginia teaching license.

During the Board of Education meeting in February 1999, personnel in the Department of Education submitted a conceptual proposal to amend the licensure regulations for school personnel (8 VAC 20-21-10 et.seq.) and establish an alternative licensure route for military personnel.

Basis

Please identify the state and/or federal source of legal authority to promulgate the contemplated regulation. The discussion of this authority should include a description of its scope and the extent to which the authority is mandatory or discretionary. The correlation between the proposed regulatory action and the legal authority identified above should be explained. Full citations of legal authority and, if available, web site addresses for locating the text of the cited authority must be provided.

Section 22.1-16 of the Code of Virginia states: "The Board of Education may adopt bylaws for its own government and promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out its powers and duties and the provisions of this title." <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+22.1-16>

Section 22.1-298 of the Code states: "The Board of Education shall, by regulation, prescribe the requirements for licensure of teachers. Regardless of the authority of other agency of the Commonwealth to approve educational programs, only the Board of Education shall have the authority to license teachers to be regularly employed by school boards, including those teachers employed to provide nursing education." <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+22.1-298>

The 1999 Appropriation Act (Items 127 D and 129 Q) requires the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Secretary of Education, to develop a plan to afford school divisions the flexibility to hire nontraditional teachers. The Appropriation Act also requires the Board of Education to identify and recommend changes to laws and regulations that prohibit school divisions from hiring quality individuals who are college graduates or practicing professionals but do not possess a teaching certificate.

Additionally, Senate Joint Resolution 384 (99) requests the Board of Education to consider pioneering alternative licensure programs and models established in Texas and New Jersey in its study of alternative teacher licensure programs.

Substance

Please detail any changes that would be implemented: this discussion should include a summary of the proposed regulatory action where a new regulation is being promulgated; where existing provisions of a regulation are being amended, the statement should explain how the existing regulation will be changed. The statement should set forth the specific reasons the agency has determined that the proposed regulatory action would be essential to protect the health, safety or welfare of citizens. In addition, a statement delineating any potential issues that may need to be addressed as the regulation is developed shall be supplied.

Currently, individuals seeking licensure via the alternative route must apply for a license through an employing school division; therefore, they must be employed as a classroom teacher prior to applying for a teaching license. The proposed amendments would permit an applicant with military experience to apply directly to the Department of Education. This change in procedure will expedite the licensure of qualified military personnel while still maintaining high quality standards for the teaching force. The proposed changes specify the prerequisites that the applicant must possess prior to applying for and receiving a license to teach in Virginia.

The proposal recognizes that military personnel have considerable expertise and training, and some have had extensive teaching experience while in the military. Instructional opportunities offered in the military include preparation in instructional training, multi-cultural sensitivity, motivational theory, management by objectives, organization skills, accountability, leadership, assessment, substance abuse, counseling skills, and computer technology.

Alternatives

Please describe, to the extent known, the specific alternatives to the proposal that have been considered or will be considered to meet the essential purpose of the action.

The proposed language was reviewed by a statewide task force of teachers, principals, superintendents, professional organizations, teacher educators, and the Board of Education's liaison to the Advisory Board for Teacher Education and Licensure. The task force recommended that the Superintendent of Public Instruction appoint a task force to develop a model program for an alternative route to teacher licensure. Specific components to the model should include:

- 1) Prerequisites
- 2) Time line requirements for successful completion of Virginia's assessments, Praxis I and Praxis II.
- 3) Scope and Sequence - The task force should establish the scope and sequence of the professional studies component of the program.
- 4) Mentoring - Provisions for the veteran mentoring program should be included in the model.

Family Impact Statement

Please provide a preliminary analysis of the potential impact of the proposed regulatory action on the institution of the family and family stability including to what extent the regulatory action will: 1) strengthen or erode the authority and rights of parents in the education, nurturing, and supervision of their children; 2) encourage or discourage economic self-sufficiency, self-pride, and the assumption of responsibility for oneself, one's spouse, and one's children and/or elderly parents; 3) strengthen or erode the marital commitment; and 4) increase or decrease disposable family income.

This regulation will offer an alternative route for military persons to receive a license to teach Virginia. Thus, it is anticipated that the regulation will have a positive impact on the employability of qualified military personnel.

The shortages of teachers nationwide are predicted to increase. According to the federal government, schools will need 200,000 new teachers a year for the next decade--up from 150,000 in recent years--as student enrollment increases and teachers retire. As a result, many

school systems welcome adults who are willing to leave established careers for teaching. Researcher Emily Feistritzer found that ten percent of new teachers hired in 1996 came from another profession; the percentage is growing yearly. (U.S. News, 10/26/98). Virginia's most recent survey data on this topic indicated that 5.7 percent of the 4000 newly hired teachers in Virginia in 1994-95 were licensed through the college coursework alternative route to licensure.

The regulation will have a positive impact on the communities across the state. As education reform efforts have increased the academic performance expectations of students, the need for more qualified teachers and smaller class sizes has emerged. Further, the need for qualified teachers, particularly minority teachers, has increased in urban school divisions.

Military personnel are a resource for prospective teachers, especially in Virginia which has huge military installations and a substantial number of military retirees. The proposed regulation recognizes the rich experiences of military personnel with degrees who are interested in teaching in the public schools. The proposed regulation removes potential barriers, such as requiring employment prior to licensure and, as a result, provides a benefit to communities and to families, even those without children in the public schools.